#### IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS COLUMBIANA COUNTY

ALLSTATE INSURANCE COMPANY, as subjected F Toase No. 2025 CU 5Z

of Marsha Crawl,

2775 Sanders Road

COLUMBIANA COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PURES:

FEB **0 3** 2025

SCOTT WASHAM

Northbrook, IL 60062

and

ALLSTATE INDEMNITY COMPANY, as subrogee J. DATTILIO of Kelly See, Anthony Monteleone and Tristan LERK

Reynolds.

2775 Sanders Road

Northbrook, IL 60062

and

ALLSTATE VEHICLE AND PROPERTY INSURANCE COMPANY, as subrogee of David Sharek, Chester Smith, Nicole Arter and Sean Hutton,

2775 Sanders Road Northbrook, IL 60062

and

ALLSTATE PROPERTY AND CASUALTY INSURANCE COMPANY, as subrogee of Allison Shipe, 2775 Sanders Road Northbrook, IL 60062

Plaintiffs,

v.

NORFOLK SOUTHERN CORPORATION, 1200 Peachtree Street NE Atlanta, Georgia 30308

and

COMPLAINT AT LAW

JURY DEMAND ENDORSED HEREON

NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY, c/o Statutory Agent, Corporation Service Company 1160 Dublin Road, Suite 400 Columbus, Ohio 43215

Defendants.

#### COMPLAINT AT LAW

NOW COMES Plaintiffs, ALLSTATE INSURANCE COMPANY, as subrogee of Marsha Crawl, ALLSTATE INDEMNITY COMPANY, as subrogee of Kelly See, Anthony Monteleone and Tristan Reynolds, ALLSTATE VEHICLE AND PROPERTY INSURANCE COMPANY, as subrogee of David Sharek, Chester Smith, Nicole Arter and Sean Hutton, and ALLSTATE PROPERTY AND CASUALTY INSURANCE COMPANY, as subrogee of Allison Shipe (hereinafter collectively referred to as "Allstate") and for their Complaint against Defendants NORFOLK SOUTHERN CORPORATION and NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY (hereinafter collectively referred to as "Norfolk"), states as follows:

#### **PARTIES**

- 1. At all relevant times, the ALLSTATE entities are Illinois insurance companies, with their principal place of business in Northbrook, Illinois, and were duly licensed to do business in Ohio as an insurance provider.
- 2. At all relevant times, the Allstate entities insured the following individuals who owned residential property in Columbiana County.

Kelly See	317 E. Clark St., East Palestine, OH 44413
Anthony Monteleone	521 E. Martin St., East Palestine, OH 44413
Tristan Reynolds	606 E. Martin St., East Palestine, OH 44413
David Sharek	176 E. Martin St., East Palestine, OH 44413
Chester Smith	226 Wood St., East Palestine, OH 44413

Nicole Arter	407 E. North Ave., East Palestine, OH 44413
Marsha Crowl	94 E. Grant St., East Palestine, OH 44413
Allison Shipe	569 E. North St., East Palestine, OH 44413
Sean Hutton	301 E. Taggart St., East Palestine, OH 44413

- 3. The ALLSTATE entities are *bona fide subrogees* of the above identified insureds pursuant to policies of insurance issued by the ALLSTATE entities, which, *inter alia*, provided coverage for the above identified insureds real, personal, and other property, including coverage for fire damage, and through equity.
- 4. At all relevant times, Defendant NORFOLK SOUTHERN CORPORATION (hereinafter referred to as "NSC") is a publicly traded corporation that is organized and existing under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia with its principal place of business located at 1200 Peachtree Street, NE, Atlanta, Georgia 30308.
- 5. At all relevant times, Defendant NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY (hereinafter referred to as "NSRC") is a Virginia corporation with its principal place of business in Atlanta, Georgia. Defendants NSC and NSRC will be identified as "Norfolk," "Norfolk Southern," or "Defendants."
- 6. NSC is a Class I railroad corporation organized and existing under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia with its principal place of business located at 1200 Peachtree Street, NE, Atlanta, Georgia 30308. Defendant NSRC is a common carrier that accepts hazardous substances for transport.
- 7. NORFOLK operated Norfolk Southern Train 32N and its railcars in their Keystone Division at all relevant times. Defendants NSC and NSRC owned the locomotive and certain railcars on Norfolk Southern Train 32N at all relevant times.

#### **VENUE**

8. Pursuant to, *inter alia*, Ohio Civil Rule 3(c), venue is proper in Columbiana County, as this is the county in which the incident occurred out of which the causes of action arose.

#### **COMMON ALLEGATIONS**

- 9. Upon information and belief, on February 3, 2023, NORFOLK Train 32N, consisting of 149 cars, was carrying abnormally dangerous and ultrahazardous chemicals including, but not limited to, vinyl chloride, butyl acrylate, benzene residue, ethylene glycol monobutyl ether, ethylhexyl acrylate and isobutylene.
- 10. Upon information and belief, NOROLK train 32N was traveling a downhill route eastbound from Illinois to Pennsylvania on main track 1 of the Norfolk Fort Wayne line of the Keystone Division.
- 11. Upon information and belief, in the area of East Palestine, Ohio, approximately thirty-eight of the train cars derailed with an additional twenty railcars damaged, several of which were carrying dangerous and hazardous industrial materials (hereinafter referred to as "the derailment").
- 12. Upon information and belief, the train was on fire at approximately 8:13 p.m. on February 3, 2023, as it passed through Salem, Ohio,
- 13. Upon information and belief, a wheel bearing overheated approximately 45 minutes before the derailment.
- 14. Upon information and belief, a hotbox detector which assesses the temperature conditions of railcar wheel bearings registered an alarm message, alerting the crew of the necessity to slow the train, ultimately coming to a stop to inspect the hot axle.
  - 15. Upon information and belief, the overheated wheel bearing continued to overheat,

resulting in the train derailment and the application of the emergency brakes as the train passed through East Palestine.

- 16. Upon information and belief, the derailed cars carried hazardous materials and chemicals, which ignited and caused the release of chemicals involving as well as detonation of certain, resulting in an explosion and release of fire, smoke, chemicals, contaminants, and debris onto the property of ALLSTATE'S insureds.
- 17. Pursuant to their policy of insurance with the ALLSTATE entities, ALLSTATE'S insureds made claims seeking reimbursement for damages resulting from the fire loss. Pursuant to the provisions of the policy of insurance issued to its insureds by ALLSTATE, ALLSTATE paid to or on behalf of the insureds sums totaling or in excess of \$295,000 to repair or replace damaged or destroyed property and to otherwise compensate the insureds for losses sustained as the result of the fire.
- 18. In consideration of payments to its insureds, both in law and in equity,
  ALLSTATE became a bona fide subrogee of the insureds to the extent of its payments, and it is
  subrogated to all rights, claims, and interests that its insureds may have against any person or
  entity that may be liable for causing the reimbursed damages that resulted from the fire loss.
- 19. ALLSTATE has provided past notice to the Defendants of its subrogated claims, rights, and that no party is authorized to prejudice nor release Plaintiffs' subrogated rights and claims.

#### COUNT I NEGLIGENCE

20. ALLSTATE realleges, reavers and incorporates by reference the allegations asserted above as if fully set forth herein.

- 21. ALLSTATE alleges the derailment, fire, release of toxic chemicals, and explosion was caused by the negligence, carelessness, and/or recklessness of the Defendants. Defendants owed ALLSTATE'S insureds a duty to use reasonable care in the transportation of hazardous materials and chemicals through the area in and around the insureds' properties. Defendants had duties to properly inspect and maintain their trains and railcars; to not place in service or continue in service a car with an overheated roller bearing; to maintain vigilant lookout during the operation of its trains and railcars; to remedy defects in equipment and remove all cars that are unsafe.
- 22. Defendants negligently and carelessly breached their duties to Plaintiffs.

  Defendant's negligent activities, include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Failing to properly maintain, service and inspect their trains and railcars.
  - b. Placing in service or continuing in service a car with an overheated roller bearing.
  - c. Failing to maintain vigilant lookout during the operation of its trains and railcars and to ensure its agents, servants, and employees were properly and adequately instructed and trained while transporting hazardous substances.
  - d. Failing to adequately staff trains with personnel that plan, prepare, coordinate, and oversee transportation of hazardous materials.
  - e. Failing to properly instruct and adequately train safety and emergency procedures in the event of a derailment.
  - f. Failing to properly develop and implement a risk reduction program; and risk-based hazard management programs.
  - g. Failing to operate, maintain, inspect, and/or repair the railway and railcars in such a way to ensure their safe and proper operation, particularly when transporting hazardous materials and chemicals.
  - h. And was otherwise negligent its transportation of chemicals.

23. As a direct and proximate result of the negligent errors and omissions as set forth herein, Plaintiffs suffered damages in an amount in excess of \$295,000.

WHEREFORE, the ALLSTATE entities, as subrogee of its insureds, pray for judgment against NORFOLK in an amount in excess of \$295,000 or such other amount the Court deems appropriate plus an award of costs and attorney's fees incurred in presenting this claim.

#### COUNT II NEGLIGENCE PER SE

- 24. ALLSTATE realleges, reavers and incorporates by reference the allegations asserted above as if fully set forth herein.
- 25. ALLSTATE alleges NORFOLK'S operation of its trains and railcars breached industry standards, safety laws and regulations, contained in 49 C.F.R.215.115 which prohibits placing a train car with an overheated bearing in service, in addition to 49 C.F.R. 179.15(a) which provides each tank must have a pressure relief device which prevents a pressure build-up to prevent fire and explosion for safe transport of chemicals.
- 26. As a direct and proximate result of NOROLK'S violation of federal law, Plaintiffs suffered damages in an amount in excess of \$295,000.

WHEREFORE, the ALLSTATE entities, as subrogee of its insureds, prays for judgment against NORFOLK in an amount in excess of \$295,000 or such other amount the Court deems appropriate plus an award of costs and attorney's fees incurred in presenting this claim.

#### COUNT III STATUTORY NUISANCE

27. ALLSTATE realleges and incorporates by reference the allegations asserted above as if fully set forth herein.

- 28. At all relevant times, Ohio R.C. § 3704.05 states "no person shall cause, permit, or allow emission of an air contaminant in violation of any rule adopted by the director of environmental protection."
- 29. Furthermore, at all relevant times, Ohio Admin. Code 3745-15-07(A) states "[t]he emission or escape into the open air for any source or sources whatsoever of... fumes, gases, vapors, or any other substance or combinations of substances, in such manner or in such amounts as to endanger the health, safety or welfare of the public, or cause unreasonable injury or damage to property, is hereby found and declared to be a public nuisance. It shall be unlawful for any person to cause, permit or maintain any such public nuisance."
- 30. As a result of NORFOLK'S improper transportation and violation of state law, handling, and disposing of volatiles, semi-volatiles, dioxins, and phosgene, Plaintiffs' insureds' property was damaged as it was exposed to hazardous air pollutants in violation of Ohio law.

WHEREFORE, the ALLSTATE entities, as subrogee of its insureds, pray for judgment against NORFOLK in an amount in excess of \$295,000 or such other amount the Court deems appropriate plus an award of costs and attorney's fees incurred in presenting this claim.

#### COUNT IV TRESPASS

- 31. ALLSTATE realleges, reavers and incorporates by reference the allegations asserted above as if fully set forth herein.
- 32. At all times relevant hereto, NORFOLK knew or should have known the chemicals it was transporting across state lines were hazardous and harmful to real property and humans, and that it knew or should have known their emission, discharge, disposal, and/or release would cause injury to Plaintiff's insureds' property.

- 33. NORFOLK through its careless and negligent transportation of chemicals caused hazardous materials, as well as explosive materials, to enter and contaminate Plaintiff's insureds' property.
- 34. Upon information and belief, NORFOLK knew or should have known their negligent and careless conduct regarding hazardous materials, failed to act in the manner of an ordinary transportation business.
- 35. As the direct and proximate result of NORFOLK, Plaintiffs suffered damages in excess of \$295,000.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs, as subrogee of its insureds, pray for judgment against NORFOLK in an amount in excess of \$295,000 or such other amount the Court deems appropriate plus an award of costs and attorney's fees incurred in presenting this claim.

Respectfully Submitted

Leslie E/ Wargo (0073112)

Wargo Law, LLC

1501 North Marginal Road, Suite 182

Cleveland, Ohio 44114-3738 Telephone: (216) 403-3350

Facsimile: (216) 744-1816 Email: Leslie@wargo-law.com

Attorney for Plaintiff

JURY DEMAND

Plaintiffs hereby demand a trial by jury with the maximum amount of jurors permissible.

Leslie E. Wargo (0073112)



Common Pleas Court of Columbiana County, Ohio

## DESIGNATION FORM TO BE USED TO INDICATE THE CLASSIFICATION OF THE CAUSE

Plaintiff Vs	ding or previously filed? Yes No 🔀
Case # Judge	
	n n n n =
CIVIL CLASSIFICATIONS: Place an (X) In ONE Cl	assification Only.
Professional Torts:   Medical Malpractice   Dental Malpractice   Optometric Malpractice   Chiropractic Malpractice	Foreclosures:  ———————————————————————————————————
Legal Malpractice Other Malpractice  Product Liability: Product Liability	Commercial Docket with Foreclosure  Administrative Appeals:  Employment Services  Other
Other Torts:    Motor Vehicle Accident     Consumer Action     Misc. Tort  Workers Compensation:   Workers Compensation     Workers Comp. Asbestos	Other Civil:  Replevin/Attachment  Business Contract  Real Estate Contract  Consumer Debt  Cognovit  Other Contracts  Foreign Judgment  Stalking Civil Protection Order  Misc. Other  Petition to Contest Adam Walsh Act  Certificate of Qualification for Employment
Amount of Controversy:    None Stated   Less than \$25,000   Prayer Amount excess of \$295,000	Parties have previously attempted one of the following prior to filing:  Arbitration  Early Neutral Evaluation  Mediation  None
I certify that to the best of my knowledge the within case is no Wargo Law, LLC- Firm Name (Print or type) Attorney of Record (Print or Type) 1501 North Marginal Road, Ste. 182 Street Address	ot related to any now pending or previously filed, expect as noted above.  Leslie E. Wargo, Esq.  0073112  Supreme Court #
Cleveland, Ohio City , State , zip (216)403-3350 Phone	leslie@wargo-law.com Address Email Address /s/ Leslie E. Wargo Signature

## Case: 4:25-cv-00224-CAB Doc #: 1-2 Filed: 02/05/25 11 of 18. PageID #: 18 Columbiana Common Pleas Court Receipt of Transaction

#### Receipt # 285576



Anthony J. Dattilio Clerk of Court Columbiana, Ohio

Received From: WARGO ESQ., LESLIE E 1501 NORTH MARGINAL ROAD, SUITE 182 CLEVELAND, OH 44114

On Behalf Of:

On: 2/3/25 1:21 pm Transaction # 318894 Cashier ESCHMIDT

CaseNumber 2025 CV 00052

Judge SCOTT A WASHAM JUDGE

#### ALLSTATE INSURANCE COMPANY vs. NORFOLK SOUTHERN CORPORATION

Fee Description		Fee	Prior Paid	Waived	Due	Paid	Balance
(DEPOS-CV) DEPOSIT-CIVIL		153.00	0.00	0.00	153.00	153.00	0.00
(C) COMPLAINT		97.00	0.00	0.00	97.00	97.00	0.00
	Total:	250.00	0.00	0.00	250.00	250.00	0.00

#### PAYMENTS

Payment Type	Reference		Amount	Refund	Overage	Change	Net Amount
CHECK	1463	ОК	250.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	250.00
		- Payments Total:	250.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	250.00
		Fayinents Iotal.	230.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	230.00

CASE GRAND TOTAL				
	Waived	Total Fee	Paid	Balance
	\$0.00	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$0.00

## IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS COLUMBIANA COUNTY, OHIO

FILED
COLUMBIANA COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

FEB 03 2025

ALLSTATE INSURANCE COMPANY, as	)	7625W 52	
subrogee of Marsha Crawl,	,	COCO 00	ANTHONY J. DATTILIO
et al.	)	SCOTT WASHAM	CLERK
Plaintiffs,	)		
	)	INSTRUCTIONS FOR SI	<u>ERVICE UPON</u>
v.	)	<u>DEFENDANTS</u>	
	)		
NORFOLK SOUTHERN CORPORATION,	)		
et al,	)		•
	)		•
Defendants.	)		

#### To the Clerk of Court:

Plaintiffs hereby request that you make service of the Summons and Complaint upon Defendants, by certified mail, at the following addresses:

Norfolk Southern Corporation 1200 Peachtree Street NE Atlanta, Georgia 30308

and

Norfolk Southern Railway Company c/o Statutory Agent, Corporation Service Company 1160 Dublin Road, Suite 400

Columbus, Ohio 43215

Respectfully Submitted

LESLIE E. WARGO (0073112)

WARGO LAW, LLC

1501 North Marginal Road, Suite 182

Cleveland, OH 44114

(216) 403-3350 (telephone)

(216)744-1816 (facsimile)

Leslie@Wargo-Law.com

Attorney for Plaintiffs

## Case: 4:25-cv-00224-CAB Doc #: 1-2 Filed: 02/05/25 13 of 18. PageID #: 20 Court of Common Pleas, Columbiana County, Lisbon, Ohio

#### Summons

Rule 4 1970, Ohio Rules of Civil Procedure

Case No.: 2025 CV 00052

SCOTT A WASHAM JUDGE

Summons on Complaint

ALLSTATE INSURANCE COMPANY AS SUBROGEE OF MARSHA CRAWL 2775 SANDERS ROAD NORTHBROOK, IL 60062

Plaintiff(s)

VS. NORFOLK SOUTHERN CORPORATION 1200 PEACHTREE STREET NE ATLANTA, GA 30308

Defendant(s)

FILED

Columbiana County Common Pleas Court February 03, 2025

ANTHONY J. DATTILIO CLERK OF COURTS

To the below named Defendant(s): NORFOLK SOUTHERN CORPORATION 1200 PEACHTREE STREET NE ATLANTA, GA 30308

You are hereby summoned that a complaint (a copy of which is hereto attached and made a part hereof) has been filed against you in this Court by the Plaintiff(s) named herein.

You are required to serve upon the Plaintiff's Attorney, or upon the Plaintiff if no attorney of record, a copy of your answer to the complaint within 28 days after service of this summons upon you, exclusive of the day of service. Said answer must be filed with this Court within three (3) days after service on Plaintiff's Attorney.

The name and address of the Plaintiff's Attorney is as follows:

LESLIE E WARGO ESQ. 1501 NORTH MARGINAL ROAD, SUITE 182 CLEVELAND, OH 44114 (216) 403-3350 (W)

If you fail to appear and defend, judgment by default will be taken against you for the relief demanded in the complaint.

Witness, My signature and seal of said Court on this February 03, 2025,

Certified Article Number,

SENDER'S RECORD



Anthony J. Dattilio 105 South Market Street Lisbon, Ohio 44432

Deputy Clerk



9590 9266 9904 2237 6219 26

Case: 4:25-cv-00224-CAB Doc #: 1-2 Filed: 02/05/25 14 of 18. PageID #: 21

#### Court of Common Pleas, Columbiana County, Lisbon, Ohio

#### Summons

Rule 4 1970, Ohio Rules of Civil Procedure

Case No.: 2025 CV 00052

ALLSTATE INSURANCE COMPANY AS SUBROGEE OF MARSHA CRAWL 2775 SANDERS ROAD NORTHBROOK, IL 60062 SCOTT A WASHAM
JUDGE
Summons on Complaint

Plaintiff(s)

VS. NORFOLK SOUTHERN CORPORATION 1200 PEACHTREE STREET NE ATLANTA, GA 30308

Defendant(s)

**FILED** 

Columbiana County Common Pleas Court February 03, 2025

ANTHONY J. DATTILIO CLERK OF COURTS

To the below named Defendant(s):
NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY
C/O STATUTORY AGENT CORPORATION SERVICE COMPANY
1160 DUBLIN ROAD, SUITE 400
COLUMBUS, OH 43215

You are hereby summoned that a complaint (a copy of which is hereto attached and made a part hereof) has been filed against you in this Court by the Plaintiff(s) named herein.

You are required to serve upon the Plaintiff's Attorney, or upon the Plaintiff if no attorney of record, a copy of your answer to the complaint within 28 days after service of this summons upon you, exclusive of the day of service. Said answer must be filed with this Court within three (3) days after service on Plaintiff's Attorney.

The name and address of the Plaintiff's Attorney is as follows:

LESLIE E WARGO ESQ. 1501 NORTH MARGINAL ROAD, SUITE 182 CLEVELAND, OH 44114 (216) 403-3350 (W)

If you fail to appear and defend, judgment by default will be taken against you for the relief demanded in the complaint.

Witness, My signature and seal of said Court on this February 03, 2025,

**Certified Article Number** 

9414 7266 9904 2237 6219 16

SENDER'S RECORD

PLEAS COLLEGE

Anthony J. Dattilio 105 South Market Street Lisbon, Ohio 44432

Deputy Clerk

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C/O STATUTORY AGENT CORPORATION

SERVICE CONTANT

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COLUMBUS OH 43215

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2025 CV 00052

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